

## **Summary of Act 150, Public High School Choice in Vermont - November 2003**

Enacted by the legislature in 2000, Act 150 required that - by September 2001 - all Vermont public high schools join with at least one other high school to form choice regions. There were no geographic or numerical limits, meaning that regions did not have to be composed of contiguous districts. Regions could have more than two schools. Regions vary in size from two to sixteen members. Individual schools may belong to more than one region. For school year 2003-2004, 61 schools (including Rivendell School in Orford, New Hampshire, which has joined the Southeast Region) belong to 19 regions; nine schools are members of two regions each.

The law specifies the following:

- application procedures and permissive deadlines
- unless all districts in a region agree, no tuition or other costs can be charged
- sending districts cover special education and technical education costs
- permissible limits on the number of students a school could allow to transfer to other schools (three percent or six students, whichever is smaller, in year 2002-2003; five percent or 10 students, whichever is smaller starting the following year; limits may be larger)
- annually, schools shall consider their capacity to enroll choice students in their schools
- requires a lottery if the number of students exceeded the limits set by the schools for transferring out or in
- discipline issues; allows students to remain in the new school in subsequent years without re-applying, within certain parameters (graduation, no longer living in Vermont, or discipline)
- superintendents shall establish transportation clearinghouses for families needing information about transportation options that would help them exercise choice. The law provides no funding for transportation

The first time students transferred was during the 2002-2003 school year.

Act 150 requires the Commissioner of Education to report to the legislature in January of each year on various aspects in the implementation of the law; the January 2005 report shall make recommendations on a wide range of school choice policy options for the future. Unless the legislature decides otherwise, the law is repealed in July 2007.